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Ethnic female business owners: more female or more ethnic entrepreneurs?

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Structured Abstract

Purpose

The primary objective of this study is to attempt to answer the question, even with a limited sample of interviewees, if ethnic female entrepreneurs are behaving more as 'female' or more as 'ethnic' entrepreneurs.

Design/methodology/approach

This paper presents empirical data from a face-to-face interview type research conducted in the regions of Attica and Central Macedonia, Greece. The study involved conducting face-to-face interviews with 15 founders of ethnic minority businesses (EMBs), between May and June 2009.

Findings

The results suggest that ethnic female entrepreneurs may share some common characteristics with their ethnic male entrepreneurial colleagues but ethnic women's unique qualities, characteristics, motivations, background and business views distinguishes them from their male ethnic counterparts bringing forth more their femininity rather than their ethnicity.

Originality/value

This paper presents the results of the first-ever research on ethnic female entrepreneurs in Greece. It examines the influences and the factors that facilitate ethnic female entrepreneurs' decision to become self-employed and their experiences of entrepreneurship. It discerns in which economic sectors they develop occupational niches and investigates how strong is family participation and support in their businesses. Last but not least this research brings forth the balance between domestic and business responsibilities and how much support from governmental initiatives, policies and training programs do they receive.

Keywords: entrepreneurs; female entrepreneurs; ethnic female entrepreneurs; Greece; minorities; self-employment.

Paper type: Research paper

1. Introduction

During the last few decades SMEs and self-employment have been seen as the panacea to nearly anything (Kloosterman, 2003; Deakins et al., 2007). SMEs comprise the largest portion of businesses in most developed and developing economies, offer the greatest potential for job creation, and contribute positively to economic growth competitiveness and productivity (Asquith and Weston, 1994; Salojärvi et al., 2005; Samitas and Kenourgios, 2005; Aaboen et al., 2006; Hussain and Matlay, 2007). During the same time period entrepreneurship as a theme among researchers, management practitioners and policy makers has witnessed a spectacular increase alongside government supported strategies targeting enterprise development initiatives and change of attitude to self-employment (Heilman and Chen, 2003; Nijkamp, 2003; Ritchie and Brindley, 2005).

Despite the general thrust towards entrepreneurship and self-employment, the research and dissemination of information and scientific knowledge about female entrepreneurship has not kept pace with the impact these self-employed women appear to have on economies. Small firms owned by women entrepreneurs are a growing phenomenon in today's world economies. Female entrepreneurs in the USA increased from 1.5 million in 1972 (nearly 4.6% of all businesses) to 2.1 million in 1979, 3.5 million in 1985, 9.1 million in 1999 and climbed to 10.1 million firms (almost 37% all businesses) employing 13 million people and generating \$1.9 trillion in revenues in 2008 (Greene et al, 2003; Petridou, Sarri and Kyrgidou, 2009). Furthermore it is estimated that female entrepreneurs account for 25% of all businesses from Asian economies to Eastern European economies, around a third of all businesses in the UK and 26% in France (Jalbert, 2000; Orhan and Scott, 2001; Fielden et al 2003; Sarri and Trihopoulou, 2005).

The boom in small business and self-employment research in the 1970s and 1980s brought also into light the subject of ethnic/ minority entrepreneurship. Researchers from the United States were among the first scholars to explore and document the fact that ethnic minorities were keener to self-employment than the native-born American population (Hiebert, 2002). Ethnic entrepreneurship became a popular subject of research and policy making in a variety of nations and multi-cultural societies in the past two decades. A plethora of ethnic minority businesses (EMBs) are a part of the business landscape in most countries of the world (Engelen,

2001; Ram and Smallbone, 2003; Portes and Shafer, 2007). EMBs have shown a notable increase in their numbers in the last two decades; the number of businesses owned by ethnic groups in the USA for the time-period 1982-1998, doubled, reaching an estimated 3 million businesses, providing jobs to 4.5 million workers and generating \$591 billion in revenues (Heilman and Chen, 2003). Moreover, ethnic entrepreneurs in the UK appear to own over 250,000 small businesses, representing over 11% of all new business start-ups (SBS, 2004).

Although research on ethnic minorities and female entrepreneurship represents a growing body of scholarly and empirical work, the ethnicity of female entrepreneurs is very rarely encountered in entrepreneurship literature (Levent, Masurel and Kijkamp, 2003; Smith-Hunter and Boyd, 2004; Benschop and Essers, 2007). This paper explores the rather neglected issue of female ethnic entrepreneurship, and through the use of empirical research data (obtained through a series of face-to-face interviews) it aims at making two important contributions to the limited existing ethnic female entrepreneurship: (1) present the results of the first-ever research on ethnic female entrepreneurs in Greece and (2) investigate and present the influences and the factors that facilitated ethnic female entrepreneurs decision to become self-employed and their experiences of entrepreneurship; discern in which economic sectors they develop occupational niches; investigate how strong is family participation and support in their businesses; bring forth the balance between domestic and business responsibilities and how much support from governmental initiatives, policies and training programs they receive and (3) attempt to shed some light in the question if ethnic female entrepreneurs are more ethnic or more female entrepreneurs.

The paper is organised as follows: in section 2, female and ethnic entrepreneurship theories are discussed. The methodology of the empirical research is then presented in section 3, followed by the results of the study in Section 4. The paper concludes with a discussion that ethnic female entrepreneurs should not be treated as homogeneous category nor should we rely exclusively on scholarly research focused on ethnic male entrepreneurs in order to answer questions about their entrepreneurial behaviour and activities.

2. Ethnic female entrepreneurs: Theoretical framework

It appears that there are as many definitions of entrepreneurship as there are writers on the subject. The critical researcher and reader will trace that the dominant themes in entrepreneurship rely to a lesser or greater extent at the description and criteria that Joseph A. Schumpeter set on his work back in the 1930s and 1940s and at the personality characteristics associated with the entrepreneur in David McClelland's 'Need for Achievement' theory in the 1960s. Table 1 provides a selection of definitions of "entrepreneurs", from the most influential writers and scholars in the subject of entrepreneurship, in an attempt to shed some light to the meaning of an 'entrepreneur',

{ Table 1 }

Further diversity and complexity exists as to what constitutes small business owners and self-employed people. 'Self-employed' describes an independently owned small business with a single employee, while small businesses are further differentiated into two sub-categories; the micro business with up to 9 employees and the small business employing fewer than 50 employees (Still and Timms, 2000; European Commission 2005; Sarri and Trihopoulou, 2005). For the purposes of the present study, no distinction will be made between the use of the terms entrepreneur, self-employed and small business owner.

2.1 Female entrepreneurs

Despite a generally admitted scarcity of theories, knowledge and statistical data both from academic research studies and from national and international research and policy bodies on female entrepreneurship, in the last two decades, women-owned businesses are increasingly becoming a significant part of the local and national economies,

"According to the available data, between one-quarter and one-third of the formal sector businesses are owned and operated by women. In the USA 38 per cent of businesses are owned by women (1999), in Finland, 34 per cent (1990), in Australia (1994) and Canada (1996), 33 per cent, in Korea, 32 per cent (1998) and in Mexico, 30 per cent (1997)." (Levent, Masurel and Kijkamp, 2003, p. 1134)

One of the key conclusions of the European Forum of Female Entrepreneurship was the immediate need to stimulate and support female entrepreneurship as well as the need to carry out research that would provide more reliable data and on a greater scale than the few small-scale qualitative researches (European Commission, 2003; Sarri and Trihopoulou 2005).

Scanning the pertinent literature on female entrepreneurship the primary focus of the majority of research reports and scientific articles is on the motives and reasons women have for establishing new-ventures; their education background and previous experiences; their personal characteristics; business networking and performance, as well as the barriers they face in the start-up phase and the access to initial funding (Aldrich, 1989; Carter, Anderson and Shaw, 2001; Hisrich and Drnovsek, 2002; Martin and Wright, 2005; Benschop and Essers 2007).

Personal Attributes. Educational and professional experiences play a significant role in shaping women's attitude towards self-employment. Their inclination towards human and social sciences and liberal arts, as well as their previous work experiences (usually in the private sector) influences the way women embark upon entrepreneurial activities and mostly propel them towards traditional service professions, retail and trade (Hisrich and Brush, 1983; 1984; Brush, 1992). Investigating the relevant literature on female entrepreneurship we conclude that the 'average self-employed' woman is between the ages of 35 and 54, married with children, with prior work experience in the private sector and a college degree or at least high school-level education (Devine 1994; Weeks, 2001).

Motivations. Empirical researches on the subject of female owned small businesses seems to validate equally 'pull' as well as 'push' reasons that lead women towards entrepreneurial activities. Women reported positive 'pull' reasons to start a business such as, looking for job satisfaction and personal challenge, independence, a 'need of achievement', flexibility between their personal and family life, and freedom on how they manage and control their time and making their own decisions (Schwartz, 1976; Scott, 1986; Ljunggren and Kolvereid, 1996; Shabbir and D'Gregorio, 1996; Carter et al., 2001). On the other hand 'push' reasons such as the need to generate more income for the family, become independent from their spouses, divorce or relocation, death of a family member, dissatisfaction with a previous employer and inequality or low wage earnings are equally important in explaining why women set-up a business (Boden, 1999; Weeks, 2001).

Initial Financing. Early research on female entrepreneurs suggested that they might encounter credit discrimination during the initial capital accumulation process and funding for their business, since lending institutions perceived women to have less chances of success than their male colleagues (Schwartz, 1976; Hisrich and O'Brien, 1981; Buttner and Rossen, 1988). Access to capital during the 1980s was identified as a major obstacle to female entrepreneurship. In more recent and larger scale comparative researches, gender discrimination in accessing start-up capital could not be confirmed. Studies in Canada and Holland found no significant differences in the proportion of capital females and males can acquire from banks and small business supporting institutions (Haines, Orser and Riding, 1999; Verheul and Thurik, 2001). Furthermore, Coleman's (2000) research of 4,500 respondents concerning possible differences by lenders and banks to male and female entrepreneurs revealed no signs of gender-biased access obstacles in obtaining loans and start-up capital.

Social Networks. The initial decision to set-up a business and mobilise the necessary resources, get support and develop a business relies to a great extent on the informal sources and the personal network that the entrepreneur has. Empirical results for female entrepreneurial networking activities are not conclusive and it has yet to be confirmed if these informal networks are actually effective in affecting women's decision to turn to self-employment (Greve 1995; Carter et al. 2001; McManus, 2001). Aldrich et al. (1989) suggest that women's networks are organised around their family, their work and their social life. Research in Northern Ireland provides some evidence that male and female entrepreneurs rely more or less on similar types of networks, while in a Hong Kong based study the findings reveal that female business owners value more than their male colleagues network information for their entrepreneurial aspirations (Cromie and Birley, 1992; Chan and Foster, 2001).

2.2 Ethnic entrepreneurs

Historically, entrepreneurship has emerged in specific groups organized along ethnic, religious, or other sub-cultural lines, such as for example, the Jews in medieval Europe, Marwaris, Jains, and Chettiars in India, Hokkiens/ Fukiens in China, the Medici merchants in Italy, as well as more recently, the Tan, Lee, Ng, and Gan clans in Singapore (Landa, 1981; Kotkin, 1993; Iyer, 1999). Beyond these historical

realities, enclaves of ethnic entrepreneurs can be found in Koreans in Chicago and Los Angeles; Chinese in San Francisco and Vancouver; East Indians in Edison, New Jersey and Cubans in Miami (Light, 1972).

According to the ethnic entrepreneurship literature immigrants leave their home countries in search of a better life for them and their families and turn to self-employment in order to overcome negative experiences and block mobility in the labor market, or due to a cultural predilection towards entrepreneurship, or as an avenue of upward social mobility (Light, 1972; Hiebert, 2002; Ram and Smallbone, 2003; Singh and DeNoble, 2004; Corsino and Soto, 2005; Portes and Shafer, 2007; Piperopoulos, 2010). A careful review of the current ethnic entrepreneurship literature reveals four main approaches that contribute to the understanding of self-employment entry motives and aspirations as shown in table 2 below.

{Table 2}

Ethnic entrepreneurs are generally described in the literature as ‘sojourners’ who work harder, save money, spend less by living frugally, have preferential access to limited, low cost funding from family and community resources and use ‘social networks’ to find market opportunities as well as cheap labor (Barrett, Jones and McEvoy, 1996).

3. Ethnic female entrepreneurs in Greece: Research methodology

Although in recent years considerable effort has been given to enhance our knowledge on female entrepreneurship and ethnic entrepreneurship very few researches have explored ethnic female entrepreneurs’ characteristics, motives and family/network support. In this realm two germane questions do arise:

- (i) Should policy makers and scholars treat female ethnic entrepreneurs as female entrepreneurs or as ethnic entrepreneurs? and,
- (ii) How does gender and ethnicity affect the entrepreneurial activities of female entrepreneurs?

In order to answer these questions and investigate in some depth the dual character of ethnic female entrepreneurs I conducted the first-to-date research on ethnic female entrepreneurs in Greece, aiming to shed some light to these questions. In view of the absence, though, of a comprehensive national database on ethnic minority owned businesses in Greece the selected 15 ethnic female entrepreneurs were drawn from the sample of 391 ethnic minority businesses that Piperopoulos¹ (2010) has constructed using various published sources (such as the National Statistical Service of Greece, the Greek Ministries of Labor and Interior and the Hellenic Migration Policy Institute database) and unpublished lists of businesses from foreign embassies and consulates and from ethnic group business affiliations/institutions.

The study involved conducting face-to-face interviews with the 15 founders of ethnic minority businesses (EMBs), between May and June 2009. The sample consists of seven Albanians, three Armenians, two Bulgarians, two Russians and one Georgian female entrepreneur that were at the start-up or early stage (first three years) of their business. Since the primary objective of this study is to understand if ethnic female entrepreneurs are more 'female' or more 'ethnic' entrepreneurs, no distinction will be made between the five different ethnicities of the ethnic female business owners.

According to Patton (1987) and Pole and Lampard (2002), the advantages of face-to-face interviews are that interviewers can probe fully for responses and clarify any ambiguities, more complicated and detailed questions can be asked, more information and of greater depth can be obtained, inconsistencies and misinterpretations can be checked, and there are no literacy requirements for respondents. Furthermore, the scholars argue that open-ended questions can be included to enable respondents to give their opinions in full on more complex topics. They also provide rich and quotable material, which enlivens research reports.

Personal interviews were conducted with the selected sample of female and ethnic female entrepreneurs using the *general interview guide approach*, which enabled me, to plan and have a list of open-ended questions, subjects and issues to

¹ The research by Piperopoulos (2010, pp. 144-146) involved conducting interviews with 391 founders of EMBs and 132 of their family members, between January 2006 and August 2008, from eight different ethnic communities whose members migrated to the Attica and Central Macedonia regions of Greece. Approximately 4% (or 15 cases) of the sample of EMBs are owned by females. I used this database to locate the 15 ethnic female entrepreneurs and conduct additional research (based on face-to-face interviews) during May and June 2009.

discuss with women entrepreneurs, while also trigger a spontaneous conversation with their family members to get information and knowledge that could be missed out during the guided interview. The issues explored during the face-to-face interviews included: (a) their personal characteristics and attributes (education and background); (b) their motives to become self-employed and their experiences of entrepreneurship; (c) the access to resources and initial capital at the 'start-up' phase of the business, and (d) the role and contribution of women's family members and social network in the set-up and support of their entrepreneurial activities.

I assured interviewees of anonymity and confidentiality since the aim of the research was purely scientific and not related to any official governmental agencies. For the participants the interviews were the second time (the first time was during the January 2006 and August 2008 period) they had been given an opportunity to talk to third parties about their professional and personal ambitions and they felt more comfortable to discuss the above issues with me.

4. Empirical results and analysis

The presentation and analysis of the research results starts with the *personal characteristics of the female entrepreneurs' and their business activities*.

As shown in table 3, nearly half of the ethnic female entrepreneurs (46.7%) are between the ages of 26-34, are married (73.5%) and have children (73.3%). More than half of the ethnic entrepreneurs (53.3%) have graduated from high-school/technical schools, 26.7% have university degrees and the vast majority (80%) can speak Greek from fairly well up to fluently. Half of the ethnic female entrepreneurs (53.4%) reported having obtained educational qualifications in Greece such as high-school/technical school diplomas, or even Greek University degrees, 60% that they have been employed in Greece prior to becoming self-employed, and only two ethnic female entrepreneur had working experience in their family businesses back in their countries of origin. The vast majority (80.0%) of female ethnic entrepreneurs reported family reunion motives as their main reason for migration while 20.0% arrived in Greece with the desire to acquire higher-level education. Although the year of arrival in Greece varies for these female entrepreneurs, two-thirds of them (66.7) entered the country between 1990 and 2000.

More than two thirds, i.e. 73.3%, of the ethnic female entrepreneurs interviewed are first generation immigrants.

{Table 3}

Table 4, shows the varieties of different business activities the ethnic female entrepreneurs' are engaged in. More than one third of the businesses (39.9%) are in the merchandising sector (clothing, flower shops and grocery stores) while 33.2% of the enterprises are in the services sector, namely, hairdressing saloons, real estate agencies and restaurants/coffee-shops/bars. A significant percentage of 26.6% of female ethnic entrepreneurs are active in professional sectors such as physiotherapy and secondary education (they are the four professional entrepreneurs of the sample that hold university degrees). All the enterprises belong to the 'micro' business category, while 46.6% have no employees and 53.4% employ fewer than five workers.

{Table 4}

More than half (53.3%) of the female ethnic entrepreneurs have gained work experience and/or have undergone formal business training as part of their employment in bars, restaurants, coffee-shops, travel agencies, retail clothing shops, grocery shops and hotels. Most women started their own business, on average about 8 to 12 years after their arrival in Greece, and only 2 of the entrepreneurs had prior work experience in family businesses in their countries of origin.

4.1 Female entrepreneurs' motives for self-employment

In the course of our empirical research female entrepreneurs were asked to indicate in a list of six pull and six push factors the personal-subjective motives that acted as the main facilitators in their decision to become self-employed, as shown in table 5.

{Table 5}

As table 5 indicates, the most significant ‘pull’ motives for the ethnic female entrepreneurs in starting their business, with scores of 66.6% and 60.0% respectively were the personal challenge/ need for achievement and the desire to be independent. The second most important motivator for self-employment for 46.6% of the female ethnic business-owners was their ability to spot a market opportunity based on their knowledge of specific ethnic consumers needs and knowledge of the marketplace. Prior experience (work experience in the relevant economic sectors) and family tradition in business, as well as the motive of becoming rich accounted as an important entrepreneurial motive for 26.6% of the respondents. As shown in table 5 only a minority (13.3%) of the ethnic female entrepreneurs cited Greek and European Union support frameworks/funding for business start up as a motive towards self-employment.

On the other side the most significant ‘push’ motives (table 5) for the ethnic female entrepreneurs to venture on their own, with a percentage share of 33.3%, were the need to generate extra income for the family (sometimes due to the death of a family member) and the restricted opportunities for career advancement in the job market. For 26.6% of the ethnic female entrepreneurs labour/market discrimination was a factor that ‘pushed’ them to self-employment while for 20.0% the need for flexible working hours (especially for women with children) facilitated their decision to become self-employed. Unemployment and divorce/ relocation factors acted as a motivator only to 6.6% of the female ethnic business owners.

4.2 Family and network, support and information

The majority, 46.7%, of the ethnic female entrepreneurs relied on the use of personal savings at start-up (as shown in table 6). Another 40.0% of these ethnic women business owners relied on at least some initial funding from the family (combined with their own personal savings) and only a minority of 13.3% reported that they managed to get a bank loan or make use of a Greek/EU funding program to start their entrepreneurial activities. During the interviews with these female ethnic business owners the vast majority reported that they faced many obstacles from the Greek banks and financial institutions when they applied for a loan; in most cases they could not provide all necessary permits and papers in order to present a complete business

proposal, while their lack of experience as entrepreneurs resulted in the banking institutions refusal to provide them with financial assistance.

{Table 6}

As shown in table 6 ‘prior work experience/own search’ and ‘high-school/university’ are the most important information sources for the ethnic female entrepreneurs, showing percentage rates of 53.3% and 40.0%, respectively. Information sources concerning ‘friends’ and ‘fellow entrepreneurs’ were only relevant to a level of 20.0% and 13.3% respectively, while the experience of a family member in entrepreneurship was only important to one woman business owner.

As shown earlier in table 4, all the enterprises are in the ‘micro’ category, while 46.6% have no employees and 53.4% have fewer than five workers. When we examined the employee composition of these 8 ethnic female owned enterprises with less than five employees we found that all of them employed at least one immigrant worker (usually of the same nationality as the owner), while for half of them, family labour participation (i.e. cousins, brothers, sisters, close relatives, etc.) was common at business start-up and remained in evidence even after business development. Furthermore, 62.5% of the female business owners had at least one Greek working for them in the restaurants/bars/coffee-shops and the clothing sector. In addition our research brought fourth the fact that female employees constitute the majority (74%) of the total number of employees in the eight enterprises. As the owners explained to us it proved valuable to have native, Greek personnel in service-oriented enterprises so that Greek consumers can feel more comfortable to place orders in their mother tongue or engage in explanatory dialogue pertaining to types of clothing, sizes, etc.

5. Conclusions

“When gender, ethnicity and entrepreneurship intersect, contradictions emerge” (Essers and Benschop, 2007, p.64)

The average self-employed ethnic female entrepreneur in our study is between the ages of 26-34, married, with children, has prior work experience, is educated and

embarks upon traditional professions, merchandising and services. According to the literature review in section two, age-wise the ethnic female entrepreneur is much younger than the average female entrepreneur but has the same personal attributes as any other female entrepreneur.

Synthesizing the literature review presented and examined earlier in this paper and the empirical results illustrated in table 5 we could argue that the majority (ranging from 46.6 to 66.6%) of the ethnic female entrepreneurs in our research reported that their business entry decision was influenced by positive, 'pull', factors such as the need to be creative, independent, take control of their own future and not just perform the stereotypical housewife and 'mother-caring for her children' role. In addition, prior work experience and a motivation to become richer facilitated their decision to venture on their own. Contradictory to the literature on ethnic entrepreneurs (which is focused mainly on male entrepreneurs), the research results suggest that female ethnic entrepreneurs differ in their motivations towards entrepreneurship from their male colleagues [according to Piperopoulos (2010) 56-72 per cent of immigrant entrepreneurs in Greece reported 'push' factors such as unemployment, lack of suitable labor market opportunities, language barriers and ethnic/race discrimination as strong motives for self-employment] and should more properly be treated as female entrepreneurs rather as minority entrepreneurs.

Furthermore it is commonly argued in the ethnic entrepreneurship literature that ethnic entrepreneurs make use of extensive networks of identity, family and community resources to acquire business information and inside knowledge of market opportunities. These informal networks become very important at the start-up phase of the business since they can promote the newly established business through word-of-mouth in the community, provide clients and act as a pool of possible employees. In this research ethnic female entrepreneurs relied mostly on 'prior work experience/own search' and 'high-school/university' information sources to start up a business contradictory to the ethnic resources theory presented in table two.

On the other hand, in accordance with the literature review on ethnic entrepreneurship and female entrepreneurship (as presented in section two and table 2) the ethnic female business owners in this research relied on family support and fellow immigrant employees in the start-up phase of the business. In addition the initial financing for ethnic female entrepreneurs suggests that they mostly depend on their own personal savings and their family's resources to set up a business, which

resembles the findings from both ethnic male entrepreneurial and female entrepreneurial researches.

Taking into consideration the limited sample of this research, the results suggest that ethnic female entrepreneurs should not be treated as homogeneous category nor should we rely exclusively on scholarly research focused on ethnic male entrepreneurs (as presented in table 2) in order to answer questions about their entrepreneurial behaviour and activities. Ethnic female entrepreneurs may share some common characteristics with their ethnic male entrepreneurial colleagues but ethnic women's unique qualities, characteristics, motivations, background and business views distinguishes them from their male ethnic counterparts bringing forth more their femininity rather than their ethnicity.

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Annex of Tables

Table 1

<i>Definitions of Entrepreneurs</i>	
Source	Definition
Richard Cantillon (1755)*	A person, ‘undertaker’, who bears the risk of fixed costs of production (consciously making decisions about resource allocations) and of uncertain selling prices.
Jean Baptiste Say (1803)	A person, ‘a contractor’ who coordinates, organizes and supervises (possess managerial skills) an enterprise with exceptional moral qualities, perseverance, and knowledge of the world and society’s needs.
Frank Knight (1921)	A person, ‘competitor’, using critical judgment to decide whether to engage in business activity or not (make profit), in conditions of uncertainty and risk.
Joseph A. Schumpeter (1934)	A person who carries out new combinations (innovations) – new goods (products/services), new methods of productions, opening of a new market, new sources of supply of raw materials, carrying out of new organization.
Arthur H. Cole (1949)	An individual or group of individuals, who purposefully initiates, maintains or grows (aggrandize) a profit oriented business.
David C. McClelland (1961)	People with a high need for achievement (nACH), strong self-confidence, independent problem-solving skills who prefer situations characterized by moderate risk.
Mark C. Casson (1982)	A person who specializes in making judgmental decisions about the coordination of scarce resources
Peter F. Drucker (1985)	Someone (a person or an enterprise) who creates something new, something different, in conditions of risk and uncertainty.
William B. Gartner (1988)	‘Who is an entrepreneur is the wrong question?’ ... more relevant... entrepreneurship is the creation of new organizations.
Stevenson, Roberts & Grousbeck (1989)	Individuals who pursue opportunities regardless of the resources they currently control.

* Note: The definition of an entrepreneur by Richard Cantillon was obtained from the book of Antoin, M. (1986) *Richard Cantillon: Entrepreneur and economist*, Oxford: Clarendon.

Table 2

Four theories for the development and appearance of ethnic entrepreneurship

The 'cultural thesis'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit goal of migration for ethnic entrepreneurs is to start-up a business in the host society. • Special skills, cultural predilection, personal motivations, values, attitudes, aspirations for achievement and heritage are translated to entrepreneurial activities. • Ethnic minority entrepreneurs have previous experience in entrepreneurship/self-employment in their countries of origin.
The 'block mobility thesis'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative experiences and cultural barriers block immigrant's advancement in mainstream economic markets. • 'Push' towards entrepreneurship due to racial discrimination. • Entrepreneurship is an escape route from unemployment, low wages or restrained labor market opportunities.
The 'opportunity structures thesis'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrants have the knowledge of the specific needs and heritage of their co-ethnic consumers. • Establish small businesses into niche, saturated spatial markets that require low financial or human capital. • Cultural based tastes for particular goods and services (e.g. ethnic food products). • Import/ export and retail of ethnic goods. • Small businesses act as a training system for the young ethnic entrepreneurs; generate network linkages and informal communications of market opportunities.
The 'ethnic resources thesis'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic entrepreneurs make use of extensive networks of identity, family and community resources to acquire business information and inside knowledge of market opportunities. • Immigrants most of the times have to rely on ethnic social resources and personal savings at the start-up phase. • Ethnic businesses are in their majority owned and managed by members of a single family.

Source: Piperopoulos, P. (2010, pp. 141–144)

Note: For a detailed presentation of the above four main approaches that contribute to the understanding of the process of starting up an ethnic minority business and becoming self-employed see Piperopoulos, P. (2010) 'Ethnic minority businesses and immigrant entrepreneurship in Greece', *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, Vol.17, No.1, pp.139–158.

Table 3

Personal Characteristics of Native and Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs

	<i>Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Share of total (%)</i>
<u>Age</u>		
< 25	3	20.0%
26 – 34	7	46.7%
35 – 44	4	26.7%
> 45 years	1	6.6%
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Single	3	20.0%
Married	10	66.7%
Divorced	2	13.3%
<u>Family Status</u>		
Without Children	4	26.7%
With children	11	73.3%
<u>Education Level</u>		
Primary School Level	3	20.0%
High-school/ technical school level	8	53.3%
Higher Educational level	4	26.7%
Post-graduate qualifications	-	-
Qualifications obtained in Greece	8	53.4%
Work experience obtained in Greece	9	60.0%
Work experience obtained abroad (in their homelands)	2	13.3%
<u>Language ability (Greek)</u>		
Good	7	46.6%
Fluent	5	33.4%
Moderate	3	20.0%
<u>Primary Motive for Migration</u>		
Education	3	20.0%
Family	12	80.0%
<u>Arrival year in Greece</u>		
1980-1990	2	13.3%
1990-2000	10	66.7%
2000-	3	20.0%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4

Business Activities of Native and Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs

	<i>Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Share of total (%)</i>
<u>Type of Business</u>		
<i>Merchandising</i>		
Clothing	4	26.7%
Flower Shop	1	6.6%
Grocery Stores	1	6.6%
<i>Professionals</i>		
Physiotherapy	2	13.3%
Teaching	2	13.3%
<i>Services</i>		
Hairdresser/ nail treatment	1	6.6%
Real estate	1	6.6%
Restaurants/ Coffee Shops/ Bars	3	20.0%
<u>Number of Employees</u>		
No employees	7	46.6
1-5 employees	8	53.4
Total	15	100.0%

Table 5

Pull and Push Motives for Self-employment/entrepreneurship

	<i>Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs</i>
<i>Pull Motives</i>	
Prior experience/ family tradition in business	26.60%
Knowledge of ethnic needs/ market knowledge	46.60%
Independence/ 'be my own boss'	60.00%
Make money	26.60%
Greek & EU funding to start up a business	13.30%
Personal challenge/ 'need for achievement'	66.60%
<i>Push Motives</i>	
Limited opportunities to find work/ unemployment	6.60%
Restricted opportunities for career advancement	33.30%
Labor/market discrimination	26.60%
Generate extra income for the family	33.30%
Divorce or relocation	6.60%
Need for flexible working schedule	20.00%

Table 6

Family and Network Support and Information

	<i>Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Share of total (%)</i>
<u>Capital Sources</u>		
Use of family finance	6	40.0%
Use of bank/Greek/EU finance	2	13.3%
Use of personal savings	7	46.6%
<u>Information Sources</u>		
Prior work experience/ own search	8	53.3%
High-school/ University	6	40.0%
Fellow entrepreneurs	2	13.3%
Work experience of a family member	1	6.6%
Friends	3	20.0%
<u>Composition of Employees</u>		
Greek	5	62.5%
Immigrants	8	100.0%
At least one family member participating in business start-up	4	50.0%
Total	15	100.0%

Notes:

1. The section 'composition of employees' for the ethnic female entrepreneurs corresponds to a total of 8 enterprises that have more than one and fewer than five employees.